



Trail Condition Report

Caines Head State Recreation Area

March 4th, 2020

Overall Conditions: It's a beautiful and quiet time of year at CHSRA. The upper parking area at Lowell Point SRA has seen minimal plowing over the winter but is accessible (4wd is recommended). The lower parking area has not been plowed this winter but remains accessible to capable vehicles at this time. Trail conditions in CHSRA are par for the season. The Tonsina Point trail has the usual areas of overflow and ice. Proper winter footwear and ice cleats are recommended if you plan to hike to Tonsina Point. The Alpine and Rainforest (Loop) trails are covered in deep snow. The Fort, South Beach and Overland trails have up to 3' of snow depending on forest cover and elevation. Most down trees and alders have been removed from Tonsina, Fort, S.B., and Overland trails as of this report. Be advised trails can be difficult to find/follow when covered in snow and weather conditions can change drastically, please travel prepared.

Public Use Cabins: All CHSRA area cabins are currently open. **Access to Callisto Canyon and Derby Cove cabins may require a stream crossing depending upon seasonal snow melt and/or periods of heavy rain. In addition, these cabins can only be accessed during a low tide of +3ft or lower.** Please refer to the Seward area tide tables when booking your stay and be familiar with the tide cycles for the duration of your stay at either of these cabins. Tide Tables are available here: <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/noaatidepredictions.html?id=9455090&legacy=1>. The Tonsina Point Cabin is *not* tide dependent although it may require hiking above the mean high tideline during large tide cycles or active storm surges. All public use cabins are operational. Go to: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspcabins/index.htm> for cabin information.

Tent Platforms: Four tent platforms have been added to the Resurrection Bay Marine Parks over the last two summers with two additional platforms in the works. The Sierra Club built two 12x12 platforms in 2018, 20 yards SE of the day-use area at North Beach. A camping sign along the beach designates these sites.

Sandspit State Marine Park located on the NE side of Fox Island has a new 10x12 platform. Its tucked on the south side of a small, treed outcropping of bedrock that lies on the west end of the spits popular north beach. The outcropping is bordered by a brackish lagoon to the south and the beach to the north. A beautiful and popular site for kayakers, divers (a shipwreck is submerged just off the beach), and boaters alike.

The newest 12x12 tent platform lies at the east end of South Beach, NW of where the South Beach trail meets the coast. Its tucked back in the trees at one of the most popular camping areas at South Beach. Accessible by foot or boat, South Beach is a beautiful spot with great views of the islands of Resurrection Bay, the Gulf of Alaska and Aialik Peninsula.

Tent platforms are first come, first serve and FREE!!, photos of each site included at the end of this report. Go check them out!

Advisory:

- CHSRA trails and public-use cabins are accessed on foot from Lowell Point State Recreation Site (LPSRS), which is located 2.5 miles south of Seward. Follow State route 9 into Seward townsite where it becomes 3rd Avenue. Follow 3rd to a t-intersection near the Alaska Sea Life Center and take a right onto Railway Ave. Travel 2.5 miles and turn right onto Pinnacle View Rd. then make an immediate right into the upper parking area for LPSRS or continue along Pinnacle View Rd. and turn right into the lower parking area for LPSRS and access to Lowell Point Beach. The Tonsina Point Trail leaves from the southwest corner of the upper parking area. There is a connector trail between the lower and upper parking areas.
- CHSRA trails and cabins can also be accessed by boat from a water taxi service. Go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/caintaxi.htm> for a list of authorized carriers.
- Bear activity has been recently reported within the park and carrying bear spray or other deterrents is encouraged, as is a review of safely travelling and camping in bear country. Information regarding bear safety can be found at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/safety/bears.htm>.
- The Coastal Trail is the beach between Tonsina Point and Derby Cove. It also provides the only foot access from Lowell Point State Recreation Site to the Caines Head trails south and west of Derby Cove (Overland, Alpine, Fort, South Beach, and Rainforest).
- It is only passable during a low tide of +3ft or lower and the beach rocks and outcroppings can be very slick due to biofilm and seasonal ice.
- As per Alaska State Parks regulations, all firewood collected for use at public use cabins must be from **dead and down trees**. Visitors should be prepared to harvest wood in the vicinity of the cabins or bring in their own. The Tonsina Point Cabin has an oil heater that burns kerosene or diesel only.
- Treat all water in the park by filtration, boiling, or water purification tablets.
- Please use LEAVE NO TRACE/PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN ethics to minimize your impact while in the recreation area. Check out www.lnt.org for more info.

Caines Head State Recreation Area	
Tonsina Point Trail	Trail is snow covered with areas of overflow and ice. Winter footwear and ice cleats are recommended
Coastal Trail	Is the beach between Tonsina Point and Derby Cove, it is only passable during a low tide of +3ft or lower, beach rocks and outcroppings can be very slick due to biofilm and seasonal ice
Overland Trail	Snow covered, some ice and overflow
Alpine Trail	Covered in deep snow; avalanche danger exists on upper third of trail. Be aware of rotting log boardwalks/stairs
Fort Trail	1-3' of snow on trail, areas of overflow and ice especially near North Beach trailhead. A flashlight is recommended to explore the various rooms of Fort McGilvray.

South Beach Trail	1-3' of snow cover, NEW tent platform in camping area just NW of where trail meets beach, photos below
Rainforest (Loop) Trail	Deep snow cover overall, South Beach end has minimal snow; primitive trail, flooding has washed out sections on the south end of trail markers and flagging existed as of 7/25/19; be aware of rotting log boardwalks/stairs, some brushy sections

Distances in Miles and Elevation Gain/Loss:

Lowell Point Road: Seward to Lowell Point SRA: 2.5 miles, flat

Lowell Point to Fort McGilvray: 7.3 miles, +930'

Tonsina Trail: Lowell Point to Tonsina Point: 1.7 miles, +200'

Coastal Trail: Tonsina Point to Derby Cove: 3.0 miles, flat

Overland Trail: Derby Cove to North Beach: 0.6 miles, +150'

Fort Trail: North Beach to Fort McGilvray: 2.0 miles, +580'

South Beach Trail: North Beach to South Beach: 2.8 miles, +/- 380'

South Beach Trail: Fort McGilvray to South Beach: 2.3 miles, -580'

Rainforest (Loop) Trail: South Beach to Overland Trail junction: 3.1 miles, +850'

Alpine Trail: from junction with Rainforest Trail: 1.6+ miles, +750'

Alpine Trail: from South Beach: 1.7 miles, +850'

Alpine Trail: from Overland Trail: 1.4 miles, +700'

An overview map of CHSRA trails available here:

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspunits/kenai/chsraoverlandtrl.jpg>

Please contact us with questions, concerns, or reports by phone or email: Seward

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New Tent Platforms in Resurrection Bay:

North Beach (lower)



North Beach (upper)



Sandspit (brackish lagoon seen behind)



South Beach



